

Goal 4: Adult Faith Formation

Meeting: March 7, 2009

Attendance: Elizabeth Conrad, Carolyn Cox, Deacon Jim Cox, Anne Strasser, Dianne Hinds, Susan Rasins

Opening prayer

Reviewed tasks:

Carolyn – Since budget not submitted for FY 2008, \$400 is budgeted for “education.” If needed, we can request more. Dianne Hinds offered that the Gift Shop has earned \$400. This money is being held to be “used as needed” at the discretion of our Parish Administrator, Deacon Gary McBride, and may be available for our use.

Deacon Jim – Sunday Scripture discussion began last weekend and will continue through Lent. Current start time is 9:30 am but may move time up to 9:20 am to encourage more people to get involved while they are still enjoying donuts and coffee.

Diane – Of the former Renew facilitators contacted, 5 groups are still meeting. There is some interest in encouraging other parishioners to join the groups but it is limited as many are near capacity for meeting in homes. Unfortunately, no other former facilitators are interested in leading a new group.

Susan – Many different techniques are used by the local Methodist church to encourage participation including pulpit talks, offering programs of short-term commitment, and brochures and seasonal guides to current activities and programs. They are currently beginning to assist a small church in Crestview to reach out to their community and we may be able to learn more as these efforts progress.

Pia – Unable to attend meeting, however, the Wednesday noon study of the Eucharist began as anticipated.

Elizabeth – No single effort encourages participation of adult parishioners at other area Christian churches, but many varied programs are available to offer a broad range of options to meet the needs and interests of as many people as possible. Newcomer orientation presentation – may include referral from previous church, dinner and fellowship events followed by bible study, Christian book club, local mission projects (i.e. Habitat for Humanity, food pantry & thrift shop, etc.), outings and field trips (i.e. canoeing, theater performances, Mobile Museum – Dead Sea Scrolls, etc.), video series with bible study, programs developed for age groups by decades (20’s, 30’s, etc.) and further split as single (college, 22-35, 35+), married (newly vs 5+ years), widow/widower, international, etc., also teachers and leaders are trained

Discussion of following topics:

Need to foster camaraderie and encourage development of social life among parishioners.

Developing friendships at events and programs with people of similar interests will encourage participation as part of one’s social life and not just a “church obligation.”

Parish catechists require catechesis to best be able to educate our youth. Current diocesan programs seem to focus more on styles of teaching and classroom management than catechetical formation of the teachers themselves. Need to determine core curriculum and base of knowledge all catechists should know about our faith before they begin teaching. Consider providing day of instruction for teachers before RE classes begin each year.

Year round RCIA program just started in addition to current "school year" format.

Want to continue beyond Lent the Sunday scripture series or some other program for adults on Sunday morning between masses. It was suggested that Deacon Bill O'Neal may be interested in leading discussion.

Need to create variety of opportunities (written explanation, single session presentation, multiple sessions for more in depth info.) to learn about upcoming changes to the liturgy

Encourage participation by coordinating with a parish program, i.e. Parish Day, Anniversary kick-off, etc., or coordinating with Welcoming Committee to highlight parish ministries and sign up new members for service groups, faith study groups, prayer groups, etc.

Consider coordinating offerings with Christ Our Redeemer to prevent duplication and increase participation base, e.g. Centering Prayer, bible study, etc.

Plan to create short questionnaire to determine interest, narrow topics, and seek facilitators for new programs. Plan to place in pews 1st Sunday after Easter, April 18/19th and ask parishioners to complete immediately prior to the start of mass. At least 1 committee member to be present at each mass that weekend to ensure survey and pencils distributed in pews and assist ushers in collecting completed surveys for return to committee.

Saturday 5 pm: Elizabeth, Sunday 8 am: Anne, 11 am Dianne, 6 pm Susan

Many potential topics for study considered. Need to have list of resources from our parish as well as diocesan libraries to allow potential facilitators to choose topic they would like to teach/lead.

Assigned tasks to complete before next meeting:

Carolyn – obtain list of parish library contents

Deacon Jim – consult Deacon O'Neil to continue Sunday scripture discussion after Lent, help create short questionnaire for new faith sharing groups

Anne – help create short questionnaire for new faith sharing groups, develop training class for RE catechists

Elizabeth – help create short questionnaire for new faith sharing groups, continue to learn how other churches encourage adult participation

All – personally invite parishioners to lead a faith sharing group on topic of their choice

Next meeting: April 18, 2009 @ 8:45 am, RE building Room 4

Closing prayer